

Draft Enniscrone Local Area Plan

SEA Screening Report

Prepared in accordance with the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004–2011

Sligo County Council has reviewed the Enniscrone Local Area Plan 2004-2013 (LAP) and prepared a Draft LAP for the period 2014-2020, in line with the provisions of Sligo County Development Plan 2011–2017.

This LAP preparation will follow the procedure set out in Sections 18–20 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) relating to the preparation and adoption of local area plans.

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To access the internet locations of the CDP, the Enniscrone LAP 2004 and the Draft Enniscrone LAP 2014-2020, please follow the links: www.sligococo.ie/cdp and www.sligococo.ie/enniscrone

A. Brief outline of the draft local area plan

Enniscrone Local Area Plan 2004-2013 was adopted by Sligo County Council on the 1st March 2004. On 6 September 2010, Sligo County Council decided to extend the life of Enniscrone LAP by three years, to 5 September 2013.

The Sligo County Development Plan 2011-2017 (CDP) now specifies that the Enniscrone Local Area Plan is to be reviewed by 2014. The Draft Enniscrone LAP was prepared in accordance with the procedure set out in Sections 18–20 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

The CDP earmarks Enniscrone as a Key Support Town, in order to build on its strengths and existing scale of development. As recommended in the CDP, the strategy for Enniscrone is to consolidate the town through the provision of an appropriate range of services including social infrastructure, retail, office, commercial and enterprise facilities to enable it to serve its residents and those in the rural catchment in an appropriate manner.

A.1 Enniscrone Local Area Plan – purpose and structure

The Draft Enniscrone LAP is intended to serve the following main purposes:

- to provide for orderly, balanced development in the interests of the common good;
- to indicate detailed requirements regarding the provision of community facilities and amenities;
- to set specific standards for the design of developments and structures;
- to ensure that all sectors of society are properly considered and catered for;
- to provide a degree of certainty and security.

The Draft Enniscrone LAP is structured under the following main headings:

Chapter 1	Plan context
Chapter 2	Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)
Chapter 3	Core Strategy
Chapter 4	Economic development
Chapter 5	Housing
Chapter 6	Community facilities
Chapter 7	Heritage
Chapter 8	Transport and circulation
Chapter 9	Infrastructure
Chapter 10	Environmental quality
Chapter 11	Urban design

Note: All the policies and objectives contained in Sections 3 to 12 of the CDP are applicable to all settlements in County Sligo. These policies and objectives have already been assessed for effects on the environment through the SEA process in preparing the CDP 2011-2017.

A.2 Pre-Draft Consultation Paper

Following an initial survey and analysis work, a Pre-Draft Consultation Paper was prepared in 2012. The Paper identified the main issues relating to the Enniscrone under the following headings:

1. Housing
2. Infrastructure
3. Environmental concerns

Please refer to the Pre-Draft Consultation Paper for further details.

A.3 Main changes in the Draft LAP 2014-2020

The Draft LAP is similar to the existing LAP 2004-2013 in many respects. However, it contains two significant new provisions: the designation of a Strategic Land Reserve (SLR) and the establishment of a Buffer Zone.

A.3.1 Strategic Land Reserve (SLR)

Whilst the Draft LAP includes a similar extent of land zoned for development. i.e. approximately 231.3 hectares, **a lower amount of housing land will be available for development during the plan period.**

The reason behind this reduction in land available for new housing development is to ensure consistency with the Core Strategy of the CDP, which requires that a maximum of 14.8 hectares of greenfield land is to be zoned for housing in Enniscrone, in order to ensure compliance with the Regional Planning Guidelines.

The 2004 LAP zoned 78 hectares of greenfield land for residential purposes, which proved to be substantially in excess of the actual requirements for both permanent and holiday homes. There are 59 hectares still undeveloped.

Some of the peripheral or less accessible sites zoned for residential development in the LAP 2004-2013 are to be included in a Strategic Land Reserve (SLR). Proposals for multi-unit housing development within the SLR will not be considered during the plan period.

A.3.2 Buffer Zone

There is evidence of ongoing pressure for one-off housing in an extended rural area around Enniscrone. At present, applications for housing in the West Sligo area are determined in accordance with the rural housing policy outlined in the CDP 2011-2017. The area surrounding Enniscrone is designated as “*in need of regeneration*” and one-off housing is generally facilitated.

However, it has become apparent that the area is in fact under the influence of Ballina, a strong urban centre in County Mayo, and much of the rural housing permitted in recent years is subsequently occupied by people who commute to Ballina for work, school, shopping etc. This phenomenon undermines Sligo County Council’s strategic spatial development and settlement policies, which require that population growth be supported and directed into settlements, especially into Key Support Towns such as Enniscrone.

B. Background information on Enniscrone

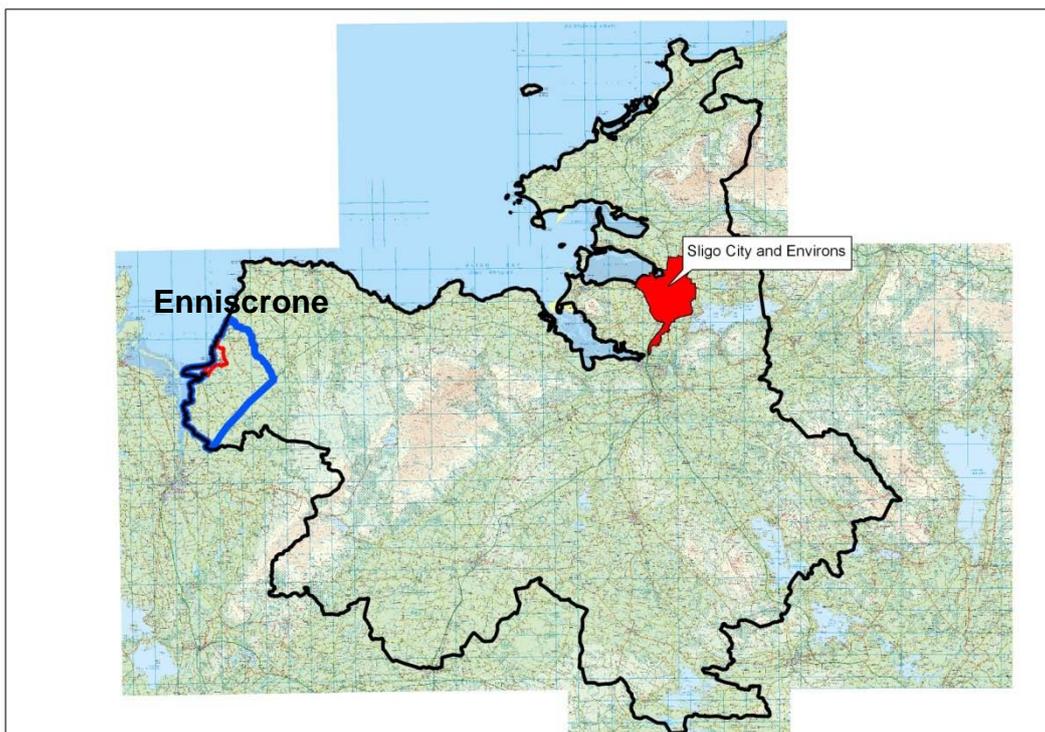
Section 2 of the Enniscrone LAP 2004–2013 and Chapter 1 of the Draft Enniscrone LAP 2014–2020 contain significant background information on the town. The existing LAP 2004–2013 and the Draft LAP 2014–2020 can be accessed at <http://www.sligococo.ie/enniscrone>

B.1 Location

Enniscrone is located 55 km (35 miles) to the west of Sligo City, close to the western county border, and only 15 km (9 miles) from Ballina, Co. Mayo. The Plan area extends south-westwards to the scenic coastline of the Moy Estuary.

The Killala Bay, the beach at Carrowhubbuck South and the extensive beach and dune system at Bartragh are the dominant landscape features in the town of Enniscrone. The immediate surroundings of Enniscrone are rather flat, with most of the town's built-up area lying at a height of 10–20 m above sea level. The east of the town and its environs rises slightly above 30 m.

Fig. 2 Location of Enniscrone in the wider County Sligo context



The proposed wider Plan area incorporates the following townlands: Attichree, Ballinteane, Ballymoghany, Ballymoneen, **Bartragh**, Bunnanilra, Carraun (partial), Carrowacardin, Carrowcoller (partial), Carrowgarry, Carrowgun, **Carrowhubbuck North**, **Carrowhubbuck South**, Carrownedden, Carrownurlar (partial), Cloonaderavally, Corbally (partial), Cottlestown, Dooneen, Drinaghan Beg (partial), Fiddaun (partial), **Frankford**, Kilglass, Killanly, Kinard, Knockagower, Lackan, Lackanatlieve, Lackancahill, Lecarrowaveagh, Magherabrack, **Muckduff**, Newtown, Parke, Rathglass (partial), Rathmurphy, Rinroe, Scurmores, **Trotts**, Tullylin or Ballfeenaun (partial).

The townlands highlighted in bold print are fully or partially incorporated within the development limit.

B.2 Population

At the time of the preparation of the Enniscrone LAP 2004–2013, the most recent demographic figures available were those from Census 2002. The results of Census 2006 and Census 2011 are now available.

Demographic change in Enniscrone 2002-2011

Area	Population 2002	Population 2006	% change 2002-2006	Population 2011	% change 2006-2011
County Sligo	58,200	60,894	+4.6	65,270*	+7.2
Kilglass ED	1,245	1,347	+8.2	1,639	+21.7
Castleconor West ED	825	891	+8.0	1,002	+12.5
Enniscrone Town	668	829	+24.1	1,223	+47.5
of which Kilglass portion	627	789	+25.8	1,101	+39.5
Castleconor West portion	41	40	-2.4	122	+205.0

Source: cso.ie

In accordance with the Core Strategy of the CDP, the recommended population level for Enniscrone is 1,200 persons by 2017. It is evident from the Census 2011 figures that this level of population has been exceeded. This is considered a positive development and an indicator of Enniscrone’s capacity to attract and retain permanent residents, despite the fact that it is generally functioning as a holiday town.

Through the appropriate allocation of land for balanced residential development, together with associated policies and objectives, the Draft Enniscrone LAP will ensure consistency with the CDP’s strategic spatial development and settlement policies.

B.3 Archaeological heritage

There are 137 recorded archaeological monuments in the Plan area, of which 19 are located inside the development limit. There is a variety of archaeological remains, including ring forts, souterrains, passage tombs, a church (Valentine’s Church), a graveyard and a Castle (listed below as “fortified house”).

Recorded archaeological monuments within the development limit of Enniscrone LAP

ENTITY ID	SMRS	TOWNLAND	CLASS DESCRIPTION
SL02027	SL016-001002-	CARROWHUBBUCK NORTH	Hut Site possible
SL02030	SL016-001005-	CARROWHUBBUCK NORTH	Hut Site possible
SL02054	SL016-014001-	CARROWHUBBUCK SOUTH	Ringfort - Rath
SL02055	SL016-014002-	CARROWHUBBUCK SOUTH	Souterrain
SL02056	SL016-015----	CARROWHUBBUCK SOUTH	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb
SL02058	SL016-017001-	CARROWHUBBUCK SOUTH	Ringfort - Rath
SL02059	SL016-017002-	CARROWHUBBUCK SOUTH	Souterrain
SL02062	SL016-019001-	CARROWHUBBUCK SOUTH	Church

ENTITY ID	SMRS	TOWNLAND	CLASS DESCRIPTION
SL02063	SL016-019002-	CARROWHUBBUCK SOUTH	Graveyard
SL02064	SL016-020----	CARROWHUBBUCK SOUTH	Ringfort - Rath
SL02065	SL016-021----	CARROWHUBBUCK SOUTH	Enclosure
SL02066	SL016-022----	CARROWHUBBUCK SOUTH	Ringfort - Rath
SL07075	SL016-085----	MUCKDUFF	Mound
SL02026	SL016-001001-	CARROWHUBBUCK NORTH	Cliff-Edge Fort
SL02060	SL016-018----	CARROWHUBBUCK SOUTH	House - Fortified House
SL02028	SL016-001003-	CARROWHUBBUCK NORTH	Hut Site possible
SL02031	SL016-001006-	CARROWHUBBUCK NORTH	Souterrain
SL02057	SL016-016----	CARROWHUBBUCK SOUTH	Megalithic Tomb - Passage Tomb
SL02029	SL016-001004-	CARROWHUBBUCK NORTH	Hut Site possible

Fig. 3 Archaeological sites and monuments in the Enniscrone Plan area



B.4 Natural heritage

As indicated above, the Killala Bay, the beach at Carrowhubbuck South and the extensive beach and dune system at Bartragh are the dominant landscape features in the town of Enniscrone. These outstanding areas also represent a wealth of natural heritage, which is protected under the Birds and/or the Habitats Directive and also under national legislation.

The following designated areas are located within 15 km of Enniscrone:

Special Protection Areas

Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA

Special Areas of Conservation

Lackan Saltmarsh and Kilcummin Head

Killala Bay/Moy Estuary

River Moy

Ox Mountains Bogs

Lough Hoe Bog

Proposed Natural Heritage Areas

Killala Bay/Moy Estuary

Creevagh Head

Killala Esker

Cloonagh Lough (Mayo)

Easky River

Dunneill River

Lough Hoe Bog

Ox Mountains Bogs

The three types of designated areas are shown in Figures 4, 5 and 6 on the following pages.

Fig. 4 Special Areas of Conservation (orange) within 15 km (red circle) of Enniscrone

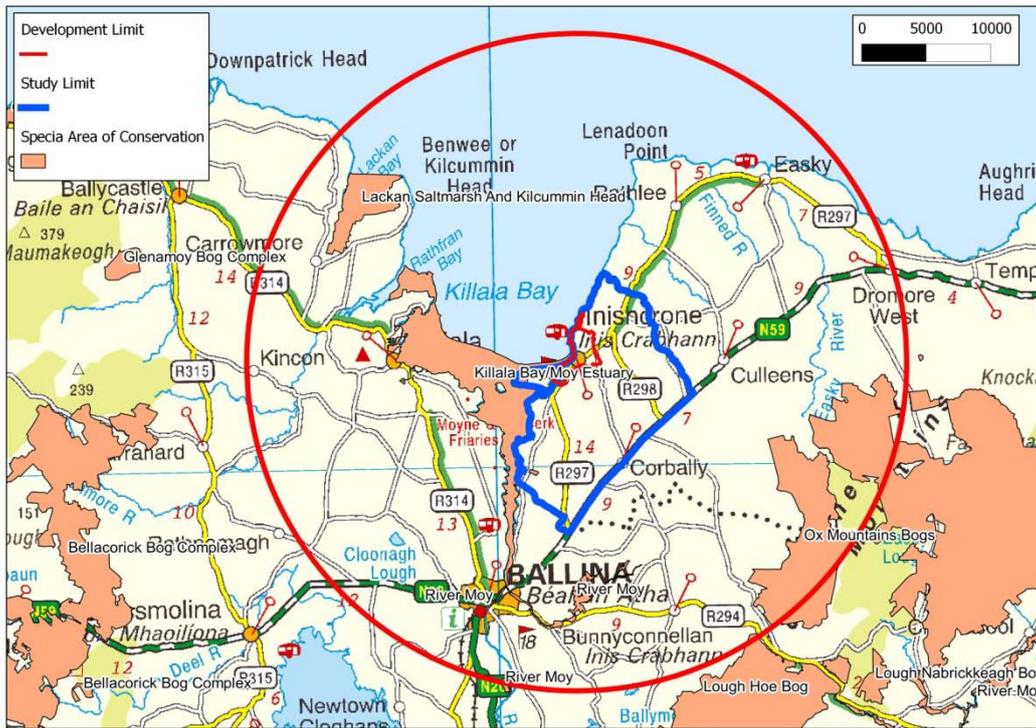


Fig. 5 Proposed Natural Heritage Areas (green) within 15 km (red circle) of Enniscrone



Fig. 6 Special Protection Areas (blue) within 15 km (red circle) of Enniscrone



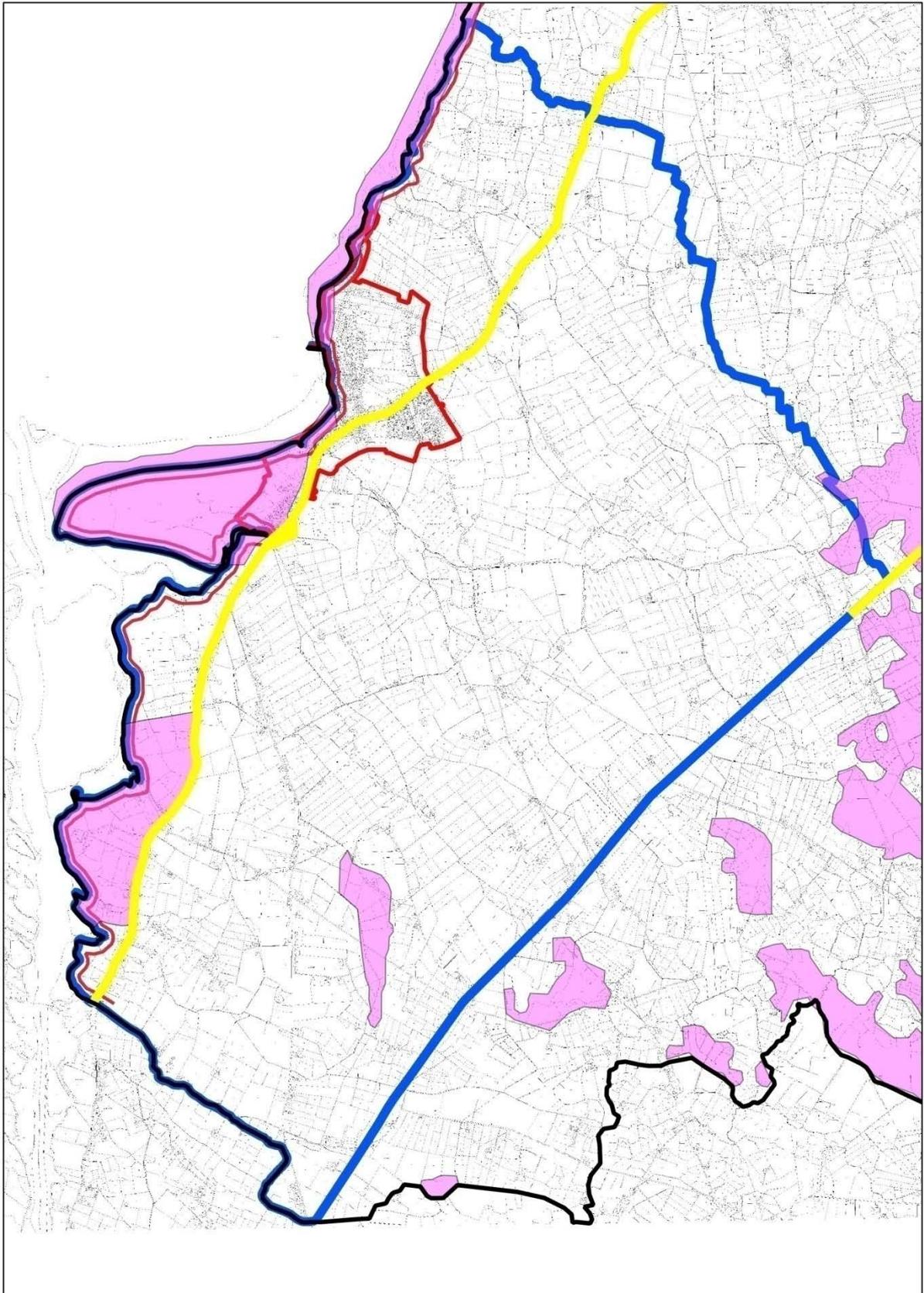
B.5 CDP designations

The County Development Plan 2011-2017 includes a Landscape Characterisation Map, which is a tool for assessing the visual impact and sustainability of new development. The map, first published as part of CDP 1999-2004, is based on composite landscape studies and has been further refined throughout the years.

The features that can be found in/around Enniscrone are listed below.

- Most of the landscape is classified as *normal rural landscape*;
- There are two substantial *sensitive rural landscape* areas adjoining the coastline (shown in pink in Fig. 7);
- The entire length of the coastline within the Plan area is designated as *visually vulnerable*;
- The regional road R-297 is a designated “*scenic route*” from Scurmore to Dromore West (i.e. both to the east and to the west of Enniscrone); the local road L-2605, i.e. the Coast Road from Scurmore to the Mayo County Boundary, is also a designated *scenic route*. Only a small portion of the N-59, on the south-eastern boundary of the Plan area, is a designated *scenic route*.

Fig. 7 Extract from the CDP Landscape Characterisation Map - sensitive rural landscapes (pink areas), visually vulnerable coastline (red line), scenic routes (yellow lines)

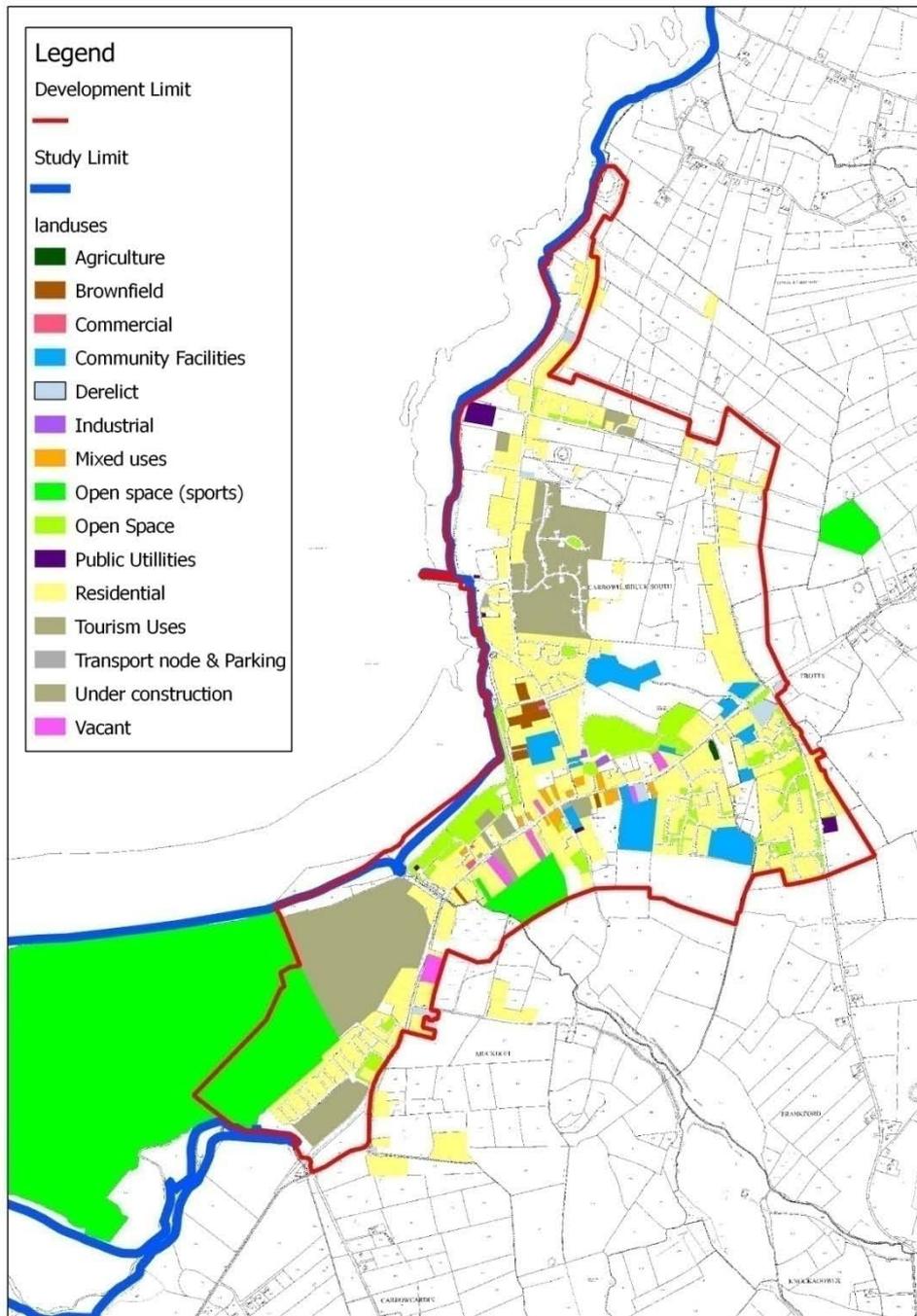


B.6 Land use

Traditionally, development has occurred mainly along the regional road R-297 (Main Street) and along the coast (Cliff Road). More recently, development has taken place on backlands but also in peripheral areas served by substandard roads. There is no clearly defined town centre, although commercial activity, retailing and tourist facilities are concentrated along the main street (R-297). Industrial development is almost non-existent, while open space can be found in large amounts and in different forms.

The substantial amount of greenfield land inside the development limit is evident in the image below.

Fig. 8 Current land use in Enniscrone (December 2013)



B.7 Built environment and heritage

Please refer to Chapters 1 and 7 of the Draft Enniscrone LAP 2014-2020 for information regarding the historical development of the town along with an analysis of more recent development trends and issues. The Draft LAP also includes an Appendix listing the structures in Enniscrone that have been included within the Record of Protected Structures as per the CDP 2011-2017. The relevant map can be found in Chapter 12 of the Draft LAP.

B.8 Water supply

Enniscrone is supplied from the Lough Easky Regional Water Scheme. The water treatment system consists of clarification, rapid gravity filtration, chlorination and fluoridation. The Scheme, which has a design capacity of 4,400 m³/day, supplies an average of 3000 m³/day, serving a population in excess of 5,000 plus a large agricultural demand in the north-west Sligo area.

The SCADA (Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition) system at the treatment works and the telemetry system monitoring flows in the network and water levels in the 10 no. reservoir sites has been upgraded to provide full 'real time' information for the entire scheme.

B.9 Wastewater treatment

The original wastewater treatment works in Enniscrone have been to a modern treatment works standard with the provision of additional tankage, ancillary equipment and a sludge satellite station on site. In addition, improvements have been made to the two pumping stations at Bellawaddy and Cliff Road.

The 5-million-euro wastewater treatment facility in Enniscrone now incorporates primary and secondary treatment, storm water attenuation, sludge dewatering and also remote monitoring via a dial-out alarm system in the event of a malfunction.

The plant has the capacity to treat wastewater generated by a population equivalent of 5,000. It ensures that all treated effluent discharged into Killala Bay from Enniscrone is in full compliance with the Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive standards. This supports Enniscrone's Blue Flag status for its beaches.

B.10 Flood risk

A **Flood Risk Assessment** (FRA) has been carried out as part of the preparation of the Draft Enniscrone Local Area Plan 2014-2020. This assessment has informed zoning decisions and led to the incorporation of an additional flood-risk management objective on a specific site (refer to Chapter 10 Environmental quality).

According to the OPW's Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment Maps, Enniscrone and the surrounding area are subject to only limited coastal flooding, fluvial flooding and pluvial flooding.

Fluvial flood risk in the Plan area occurs essentially lands proposed to be included in the Buffer Zone, outside the development limit. It is considered that any pluvial flood risk within the development zone can be managed through effective drainage and construction methods. The extent of coastal flood-risk areas does not appear to infringe upon the built fabric of the town.

The screening exercise outlined in the following sections was done in accordance with Article 14A of the SEA Regulations, taking into account the relevant criteria set out in Schedule 2A of same.

C. Characteristics of the proposed local area plan

- a. "the degree to which the plan sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources"

Schedule 2A of P&D (SEA) Regulations 2004-2011

The CDP 2011-2017 has set the broad framework for the Enniscrone LAP 2014-2020 (LAP), which will now implement this framework at a more detailed and local level.

The Draft Enniscrone LAP 2014-2020 sets a medium- to long-term **framework for sustainable local development** that will be used to assess planning applications. Land is the main resource to be allocated through zoning.

The area included within the development in Enniscrone is approximately 180 ha, much of which is already developed. It is proposed to place 26.6 hectares of land in the Strategic Land Reserve. Approximately 21 hectares will be zoned for open spaces.

There will be approximately 14.8 hectares zoned for multi-unit housing development. This represents a significant reduction in the extent of land available for residential development in the LAP 2004-2013. [Please refer to Chapter 3 (Core Strategy) of the Draft LAP for more details regarding zoning.]

However, significant additional residential development will not be an aim of the Draft LAP.

The primary aim of the plan is one of consolidation rather than expansion, while at the same time implementing at local level the CDP framework for the protection of Natura 2000 areas in the vicinity of the town. The impacts on the environment are therefore unlikely to be significant and any such impact will be satisfactorily mitigated through the development management process.

- b. "the degree to which the plan influences other plans, including those in a hierarchy"

Schedule 2A of P&D (SEA) Regulations 2004-2011

The LAP is intended as a tool for implementing the CDP strategies at local level as part of an integrated planning strategy. In accordance with section 19 (2) of the Planning and Development Act 2010, a local area plan shall be consistent with the objectives of the development plan. The LAP is superseded by the CDP in case of conflicting provisions. However, such conflicts should not occur, as the LAP will be prepared in a manner that is consistent with the CDP 2011-2017.

- c. "the relevance of the plan for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development"

Schedule 2A of P&D (SEA) Regulations 2004-2011

The LAP **will promote sustainable development at local level** through balanced allocation of land to various uses and through objectives aiming to protect Natura 2000 areas, other designated natural heritage areas, to protect archaeological heritage and the built heritage.

Through the consolidation of the existing town centre and integration of land-use and transportation objectives, the LAP will promote sustainable transport through providing alternatives to car-based transport.

- d. "environmental problems relevant to the plan" Schedule 2A of P&D (SEA) Regulations 2004-2011

Environmental concerns in the Enniscrone LAP area, particularly outside the development limit, would include the potential encroachment of development onto Natura 2000 areas and other designated areas, contamination of surface and ground water by poorly treated effluent discharge, substandard septic tanks and surface water run-off.

However, appropriate CDP policies are in place to address these concerns within the lifetime of the plan. Where necessary, additional policies and objectives will be incorporated in the Enniscrone LAP, including restrictions on residential development in the rural area surrounding Enniscrone, in accordance with Buffer Zone policies.

It is considered that any concerns regarding flooding have been appropriately addressed in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment carried out in conjunction with the preparation of the LAP. The zoning of land and the formulation of policies and objectives have been informed by the outcome of this assessment.

- e. "the relevance of the plan for the implementation of European legislation on the environment (e.g. plans linked to waste management or water protection)"

Schedule 2A of P&D (SEA) Regulations 2004-2011

Enniscrone LAP **does not seek to implement directly European legislation** on the environment. The LAP has been drafted in compliance with the policies and objectives of the CDP 2011-2017, which contains policies implementing relevant European legislation.

Consistent with the CDP 2011-2017, the LAP has regard to the Western River Basin Management Plan and the Western Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) study.

D. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:

- a. the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects;

The development of lands within the LAP will result in a high probability of effects on the environment, through the expansion of the built-up area and population increase. However, many of the effects will be positive, as the LAP will provide a framework for the sustainable development of the area, rather than allowing development to proceed in a haphazard manner. In this regard, the LAP will provide for the protection of built and natural heritage, along with the protection of natural resources.

As outlined previously in this report, the Draft LAP proposes a reduction in the overall extent of land available for development. The main aim of the plan is consolidation rather than large-scale expansion. Appropriate mitigation policies have been incorporated to address any associated impacts on the environment.

The likely effects will arise gradually over the lifetime of the plan. It is likely that the effects will be permanent and will not be readily reversed. However, this is not considered significant in the context of the ongoing sustainable development of the plan area.

- b. the cumulative nature of the effects;

The ongoing development of the area will have a variety of effects, such as traffic increase, demands on services/resources and impacts on built, natural and cultural heritage assets. However, having regard to the Draft LAP's provision of an integrated strategy for the sustainable development of the area, it is considered that the cumulative nature of these effects can be adequately addressed and appropriate mitigation measures have been incorporated.

As part of the CDP 2011-2017, land-use plans were prepared for other settlements in West Sligo, such as Easky and Dromore West, which are located approximately 15 km and 21 km respectively to the east of Enniscrone. Considering the separation distances and the fact that the plans for these settlements comply with the CDP in terms of environmental protection policies and objectives, it is considered that there is no potential for cumulative effects.

The town of Ballina, located circa 15 km to the west in County Mayo, is also considered to be sufficiently remote so that cumulative effects of urban development on the environment would not occur.

- c. the transboundary nature of the effects;

The entire LAP area is located within the administrative area of Sligo County Council.

The water supply (from Lough Easky) also comes from within County Sligo.

The wastewater treatment system discharges to Killala Bay, which adjoins County Mayo. However, following the 2008 upgrade of the WWTW, the quality of the effluent has significantly improved as demonstrated by the **good** water quality in Killala Bay (as per EPA's *Water Quality in Ireland 2007-2009*) and **good** quality of the bathing water both at Enniscrone Beach and at Ross Beach, Killala, Co. Mayo (as per EPA's *Quality of Bathing Water in Ireland – An Overview of the Year 2011* and www.bathingwater.ie).

It is not anticipated that the LAP will have any transboundary effects.

- d. the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents);

It is anticipated that the implementation of the LAP will not result in any significant risks to human health or the environment. Future development will have to conform to the policies and objectives of the LAP, whose fundamental aim is to create a sustainable and healthy environment in which people can live and work. Suitable mitigation measures will be incorporated into the LAP, where necessary.

There are no designated SEVESO sites within the plan area.

- e. the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of population likely to be affected);

The spatial extent and magnitude of the vast majority of the effects of the LAP will be limited to Enniscrone town itself. The plan allows for some limited development, but this would most likely occur anyway in the absence of the LAP. Population figures for the town were presented earlier in this report.

As the overall plan area extends significantly outside the town (in the buffer zone), the LAP will inevitably result in some minor impacts on the wider surrounding environs of the town. However, these impacts should be largely positive, given the restrictions imposed by the buffer zone designation.

The Draft LAP seeks to avoid and mitigate any of potentially negative effects on the environment through the promotion of sustainable development and the incorporation of appropriate policies and objectives, particularly in relation to the protection of Natura 2000 areas.

- f. the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:

- i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;

The majority of surrounding natural features, particularly the beach and dunes, are located outside the development limit, within the buffer zone, where development will be strictly controlled. It is therefore not likely that significant effects will occur.

The existing CDP policies on heritage (built, natural and archaeological), landscape and the environment apply to the LAP area. Any potential significant effects can be adequately addressed through the development management process.

- ii) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values;

The existing CDP and Draft LAP ensure that adequate policies and objectives are in place to maintain environmental quality standards. These will be enforced through the development management process.

- iii) intensive land-use;

The Draft LAP focuses on consolidation as opposed to growth. It is unlikely that high-intensity development will occur during the lifetime of the Plan. Any effects are unlikely to be significant in this regard.

- g. the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognized national, European Union or international protection status;

The Plan area borders the Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA and includes a coastal strip included in the Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC and a portion of the Killala Bay/Moy Estuary pNHA (at Bartragh). However, these small portions of designated areas would be included in the Buffer Zone, which has the role of restricting development and protecting natural assets. Both the CDP and the Draft LAP contain provisions designed to ensure that there will be no negative impact on the Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA, SAC and pNHA. Whilst it is acknowledged that the LAP can have effects on the wider surrounding environment, it is considered that due to the mitigation policies included in the CDP, together with the separation distances between the development area and the designated natural heritage areas, significant effects will not occur.

E. Conclusion

The Draft Enniscrone LAP 2014-2020 will be prepared in the context of the existing CDP 2011-2017, which sets out a strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the County and has already been assessed under the SEA completed as part of the CDP process.

The LAP will be consistent with the CDP. The CDP provisions (including the SEA mitigation measures) will apply to the LAP area.

The LAP will be focused on the consolidation of the town and the protection of Natura 2000 and other designated areas within the Plan area.

When compared to the existing Enniscrone LAP 2004-2013, the proposed LAP will involve a significant reduction in the extent of overall area of greenfield land available for development during the plan period, particularly in relation to residential development. It will also establish a Buffer Zone in order to facilitate the above-mentioned urban consolidation and to offer additional protection to designated natural heritage areas.

Having described the characteristics and assessed the expected effects of implementing the Local Area Plan for Enniscrone, and having regard to the characteristics of the area likely to be affected, it appears that the proposed LAP, if implemented, would have negligible effects on the environment.

On the basis of the above assessment based on the criteria set out in Schedule 2A of the SEA Regulations, it is the opinion of the Planning Authority, at this stage of the process, that the proposed Enniscrone LAP is not likely to have significant effects on the environment.

Accordingly, a full Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required.

F. Consultation with environmental authorities

As prescribed by the SEA Regulations, the relevant environmental authorities were notified and a preliminary Screening Report was sent in December 2013 to the Minister for Environment, Communities and Local Government, the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Planning Authorities of counties Mayo, Leitrim and Roscommon and to Ballina Town Council, for comments.

Roscommon County Council indicated – on 13 January 2014 – that, in light of the distance of the Enniscrone area from the boundaries of County Roscommon, Roscommon County Council had no comment to make in respect of the SEA Screening of the Draft Enniscrone LAP.

Leitrim County Council responded on 14 January 2014, noting that since the Plan area borders the Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA and includes a coastal strip which is part of the Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC, the requirements of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive should be taken into consideration in the making of the Plan.

The Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, through Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI), responded on 17 January 2014 with the following comments:

1. The 1,223 population of Enniscrone, as recorded by Census 2011, does not reflect the population during peak holiday season. Sligo County Council should ensure that the wastewater treatment plant has the capacity to treat any increase in biological or hydraulic loading as a result of development within the town.
2. The IFI welcomes the inclusion of a buffer zone to help consolidate the settlement by preventing sprawl. This is considered effective in reducing effluent from single wastewater treatment systems, which can have significant impacts on surface and ground water, with subsequent effects on aquatic life.
3. It is suggested to include a policy on the protection of aquatic habitat in the Enniscrone LAP. This should include the protection of riparian vegetation along watercourses, by zoning the land adjacent to the Bellawaddy River and Devlin River for open space and putting buffer zones in place along their banks.
4. It is recommended that any drainage works or in-stream works be carried out by Sligo County Council only after consultation with IFI.
5. Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems should be incorporated into all developments within Enniscrone town.
6. The LAP should include a policy of the control of invasive species, such as Himalayan balsam, Giant hogweed and Japanese knotweed, which out-compete native riparian species.

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine responded on 20 January 2014, recommending that the proposed LAP should not compromise the foreshore now or in the future and should not affect the Department's ability to grant new aquaculture licenses in the area.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) noted the Planning Authority's conclusion that a full SEA is not required. The Agency acknowledged the proposal to designate a buffer zone in the rural area surrounding Enniscrone, and made the following recommendations:

- A. The LAP should highlight areas at risk of flooding, should zone such areas appropriately and should include a policy or objective to incorporate the recommendations of the Western CFRAMS when adopted.
- B. Consideration should be given to protecting ecological corridors within the Plan area and establishing ecological buffer zones between designated sites (Killala Bay/Moy Estuary pNHA/SAC/SPA) and areas marked for development.

The EPA also referred to its previous submission (made in response to pre-draft consultation in 2012), which recommended that the new Plan should consider the following:

- i. Provision of adequate and appropriate drinking water supply to service the current and future population of the Plan area
- ii. High groundwater vulnerability throughout the Plan area;
- iii. Protection of water quality of the Bellawaddy River and Killala Bay;
- iv. Designated shellfish waters at Killala Bay;
- v. Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC/SPA/pNHA/Ramsar site;
- vi. High radon concentrations within the Plan area.

The agency listed the legal requirements that must be complied with in the preparation of the Draft LAP, including the requirement for Appropriate Assessment.

As no other comments were received from environmental authorities, the Planning Authority – having incorporated the recommendations above into the Draft Plan – decided not to undertake a full SEA. This decision is published alongside the Draft Plan.

Following consultation with the environmental authorities, the SEA Screening Report (this report) has been updated in April 2014 and is available alongside the Draft LAP as a separate publication.